

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 SS-20 NSC-10 SPC-03 L-03

H-03 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 DRC-01 (ISO) W

----- 104291

P R 272035Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5890

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT OF SPAIN 1675

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN TD US

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: GOTT UNWILLING TO RESCIND DECISION RE EASTERN

REF: POS 1671

1. HAVING RECEIVED NO RESPONSE FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY TO OUR QUERY ON REVOCATION OF EASTERN'S SECOND FREQUENCY, I RAISED MATTER WITH PERMANENT SECRETARY TO PRIME MINISTER DODDRIDGE ALLEYE (WHO INCIDENTALLY AND PERHAPS PERTINENTLY IS ALSO BWIA CHAIRMAN). HE HAS BEEN CREDITED BY EASTERN (REFTEL) OF BEING BEHIND GOTT ORDER. ALLEYNE WAS QUITE ADAMANT, ACCUSING EASTERN OF HAVING "SNEAKED IN" ITS SECOND FREQUENCY WITHOUT PROPER CLEARANCES AND OF OVER-BALANCING BWIA'S COMPETITIVE POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE US AIRLINES. BOTH TO ALLEYNE AND SUBSEQUENTLY TO MINEXTAFF, I HAVE STRESSED THE HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED IN CANCELLATION OF MANY CONFIRMED RESERVATIONS. ALTHOUGH WE ARE NOT SANGUINE THAT THIS WILL HAVE MUCH SUCCESS, IT IS THE ONLY LINE THAT STANDS A CHANCE AT THIS POINT.

2. ACCORDING TO DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION (WHO WAS OUT OF THE COUNTRY AND DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN MEETING IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE WHICH RESULTED IN TERMINATION ORDER TO EASTERN), EASTERN WAS PERMITTED TO RESUME SECOND FREQUENCY EARLY IN DECEMBER ON BASIS OF INFORMAL POLLING OF MEMBERS OF AIR TRANSPORT LICENSING
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AUTHORITY (ATLA) BY ITS CHAIRMAN. THIS*DECISION APPARENTLY WAS

NEVER VETTED WITH PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, WHICH NOW REGARDS ITS DECEMBER 21 TERMINATION ORDER SIMPLY AS REITERATION OF ITS (THWARTED) DECEMBER 7 TERMINATION ORDER. CIVAIR DIRECTOR ALSO CITED EASTERN'S ADVERTISING OF THROUGH SERVICE TO US, WHICH HE SAID ATLA HAD ORDERED CEASED ON GROUNDS THAT IT CONTRAVENED TERMS OF ITS LICENSE. DCA AGAIN REFERRED TO PRIME MINISTER'S PREOCCUPATION WITH AVIATION FUEL SUPPLIES, AND IMPLIED THAT GOTT STILL SUSPECTS SCHEDULED CARRIERS (INCLUDING EASTERN) OF ABUSING FUEL AVAILABILITY AT PIARCO.

3. HINDS RETURNED TO BARBADOS DECEMBER 27, BUT TELEPHONED SAME AFTERNOON TO REPORT THAT EASTERN'S REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, GEORGE LISLE, PLANS TO FLY FROM PUERTO RICO TO TRINIDAD EVENING OF DECEMBER 27 TO MAKE LAST-DITCH PLEA TO "ANYONE HIGH UP IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE" ON DECEMBER 28. EMBASSY IS ATTEMPTING TO TELEPHONE HINDS TO INFORM HIM THAT WE DO NOT THINK LISLE'S TRIP WOULD ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING, ESPECIALLY SINCE ALLEYNE DEPARTED TRINIDAD THIS MORNING AND WILL BE IN FLORIDA FOR NEXT FEW DAYS. MOFFAT

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